



General Assembly

January Session, 2007

Raised Bill No. 7357

LCO No. 5125

* _____HB07357ED_APP032707_____*

Referred to Committee on Education

Introduced by:
(ED)

AN ACT CONCERNING PARAEDUCATORS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2007*) (a) Not later than January 1,
2 2008, the Department of Education shall develop and issue credentials
3 to paraeducators who qualify pursuant to the provisions of this
4 section. For purposes of this section, "paraeducator" means an
5 employee of a local or regional board of education who does not
6 possess a certificate issued by the State Board of Education, other than
7 a credential issued under this section, and who assists a teacher or
8 other professional educator with the delivery of instructional and
9 related support services to students.

10 (b) A paraeducator may apply for a credential pursuant to this
11 section in such time and manner as the Commissioner of Education
12 prescribes. A credential issued or renewed pursuant to this section
13 shall be in effect for five years. The applicant shall pay the
14 commissioner a fee of seventy-five dollars for the initial credential and
15 fifty dollars for each renewal of the credential.

16 (c) The Commissioner of Education may issue the following

17 categories of credentials to paraeducators who qualify under the
18 provisions of subsection (d) of this section: (1) Paraeducator, and (2)
19 paraeducator plus for paraeducators qualified to assist a teacher or
20 other educational professional in areas including, but not limited to,
21 special education or bilingual education. Each credential shall include
22 a designation indicating whether the paraeducator meets all
23 qualifications required under the provisions of the No Child Left
24 Behind Act, P. L. 107-110.

25 (d) (1) The Commissioner of Education may issue a paraeducator
26 credential to applicants who have (A) a high school diploma or its
27 equivalent, and (B) any of the following: (i) Have completed two years
28 of study at an institution of higher education, (ii) an associate's degree
29 or higher, (iii) achieved a passing score on an assessment deemed
30 appropriate by the commissioner, or (iv) five years of paid
31 employment as a paraeducator and thirty hours of continuing
32 education coursework pertaining to the application of skills and
33 knowledge to classroom instruction.

34 (2) The Commissioner of Education may issue a paraeducator plus
35 credential to applicants who meet all qualifications pursuant to
36 subdivision (1) of this subsection and who have (A) nine hours of
37 continuing education coursework in areas including, but not limited
38 to, special education or bilingual education, or (B) two years of paid
39 employment as a paraeducator working in areas including, but not
40 limited to, special education or bilingual education.

41 (e) Each applicant qualified under the provisions of subsection (d)
42 of this section shall submit to state and national criminal history
43 records checks conducted in accordance with section 29-17a of the
44 general statutes. The Commissioner of Education may refuse to issue a
45 credential based upon the results of such criminal history records
46 checks.

47 (f) The Commissioner of Education shall fingerprint each applicant
48 for a credential pursuant to this section before issuing the credential.

49 (g) No local or regional board of education shall require a credential
50 issued pursuant to this section as a condition of employment as a
51 paraeducator.

52 (h) The State Board of Education may adopt regulations, in
53 accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes, to
54 carry out the provisions of this section.

55 Sec. 2. Subsection (a) of section 10-220a of the general statutes is
56 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
57 *1, 2007*):

58 (a) Each local or regional board of education shall provide an in-
59 service training program for its teachers, administrators and pupil
60 personnel who hold the initial educator, provisional educator or
61 professional educator certificate. Such program shall provide such
62 teachers, administrators and pupil personnel with information on (1)
63 the nature and the relationship of drugs, as defined in subdivision (17)
64 of section 21a-240, and alcohol to health and personality development,
65 and procedures for discouraging their abuse, (2) health and mental
66 health risk reduction education which includes, but need not be
67 limited to, the prevention of risk-taking behavior by children and the
68 relationship of such behavior to substance abuse, pregnancy, sexually
69 transmitted diseases, including HIV-infection and AIDS, as defined in
70 section 19a-581, violence, child abuse and youth suicide, (3) the growth
71 and development of exceptional children, including handicapped and
72 gifted and talented children and children who may require special
73 education, including, but not limited to, children with attention-deficit
74 hyperactivity disorder or learning disabilities, and methods for
75 identifying, planning for and working effectively with special needs
76 children in a regular classroom, (4) school violence prevention and
77 conflict resolution, (5) cardiopulmonary resuscitation and other
78 emergency life saving procedures, (6) computer and other information
79 technology as applied to student learning and classroom instruction,
80 communications and data management, (7) the teaching of the
81 language arts, reading and reading readiness for teachers in grades

82 kindergarten to three, inclusive, and (8) second language acquisition in
 83 districts required to provide a program of bilingual education
 84 pursuant to section 10-17f. The State Board of Education, within
 85 available appropriations and utilizing available materials, shall assist
 86 and encourage local and regional boards of education to include: (A)
 87 Holocaust education and awareness; (B) the historical events
 88 surrounding the Great Famine in Ireland; (C) African-American
 89 history; (D) Puerto Rican history; (E) Native American history; (F)
 90 personal financial management; (G) the effective use of paraeducators,
 91 as defined in section 1 of this act, and [(G)] (H) topics approved by the
 92 state board upon the request of local or regional boards of education as
 93 part of in-service training programs pursuant to this subsection.

94 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2007*) Each local and regional board of
 95 education shall develop strategies to encourage paraeducators, as
 96 defined in section 1 of this act, and teachers employed by the board to
 97 communicate more effectively about concerns involving the use of
 98 paraeducators in the provision of effective student instruction.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2007</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2007</i>	10-220a(a)
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2007</i>	New section

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Joint Favorable C/R

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